

INVESTING IN TEACH FOR AMERICA’S SUMMER TRAINING INSTITUTES: PREPARING EFFECTIVE NEW TEACHERS FOR HIGH- NEED STUDENTS

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Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Proposal

SECTION A: SIGNIFICANCE

Teach For America (TFA) is a nationally significant, externally validated program that recruits, selects, and trains new teachers (whom we call corps members) for placement in high-need urban and rural communities across the country, with the expectation that they put their students on the path to college and life success. Since 1990, TFA has recruited, selected, and trained more than 37,000 new public school teachers for all subject areas and grade levels, placing them with partner schools and districts serving the highest-need students in the country.

As this proposal demonstrates, TFA's work explicitly addresses the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Absolute Priority 1 – teacher recruitment, selection, and preparation. In addition, our proven method meets the standard for the SEED Competitive Preference Priority 1 – supporting practices for which there is strong evidence of effectiveness. TFA respectfully requests support from the SEED grant program for a \$15 million grant to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of TFA's proven teacher training efforts, including the cornerstone of these efforts – five-week summer, residential training institutes. Additionally, the SEED project will focus on piloting two critical new institute initiatives focused on regional training institutes and Common Core alignment. Through this project, a SEED grant will help prepare 6,000 new corps members to begin teaching in fall 2013 and 6,500 new corps members to begin teaching in fall 2014.

A.1 – National Significance

This project is nationally significant because of its scale and scope, selectivity, diversity, and proven effectiveness.

Scale and scope. TFA selects and prepares a racially and socioeconomically diverse national corps of leaders to teach across all subjects and grade levels in our nation's highest need

communities. In the schools where we place teachers¹, more than 90% of students are African American or Latino and roughly 80% receive free or reduced-price lunch.² According to a 2004 study by Mathematica Research Inc., students in TFA teachers' classrooms began the year, on average, at the 14th percentile against the national norm.³ Serving more than 46 communities (called regions) in 35 states, TFA's teacher preparation program has proven to be effective across a wide variety of communities, geographies, and demographic groups. Throughout the course of this project, TFA will train over 6,000 new corps members annually; making it one of the nation's largest teacher preparation programs. SEED funding will directly impact the 12,500 new corps members TFA will train in 2013 and 2014.

Selectivity. TFA employs a rigorous, highly selective, and research-based selection process to choose program participants from a large and diverse pool of candidates nationwide.

Rigorous. For over 20 years, TFA has studied program participants who have had the greatest success in advancing student achievement. Working with experts from higher education and business, we have developed a set of selection criteria based on qualities that have been found to be predictive of successful teaching in low-income communities:

- Leadership and achievement in academic, professional, and/or extracurricular settings
- Perseverance in the face of challenges
- Strong critical-thinking skills – analyzing and utilizing data; problem solving
- The ability to influence and motivate others, especially across lines of difference
- Organizational ability – planning well, meeting deadlines, and working efficiently
- Respect for students and families in low-income communities

¹In the 2012-13 school year, TFA placed teachers in more than 200 school districts and an additional 400 charter schools/charter management organizations.

²Demographic information obtained from greatschools.org and schoolmatters.com. Using these websites, we retrieved demographic information for each school in which we placed corps members during the 2008-09 school year.

³Decker, P., Mayer, D., & Glazerman, S. (2004). *The Effects of Teach For America on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation*. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

- Understanding of TFA’s mission and the desire to work relentlessly toward achieving it

Highly trained selectors evaluate a national pool of applicants against these criteria at each stage of the admissions process –online application, phone interview, and day-long in-person interview with sample teaching session – advancing only those who provide evidence that they have the capabilities to be successful in teaching in a high-need school.

Competitive. Over 57,000 individuals from all 50 states applied to TFA’s 2013 corps – the largest number of applicants to date;17% were accepted and 6,000 will matriculate and complete training as part of this SEED project. The quality of the applicant pool is strong, with applicants holding an average GPA of 3.31 while attending a diverse set of more than 2,600 universities across the country, including 23% of seniors at Spelman College, 14% at Howard University, 6% at the University of Michigan, and 3% at University of Texas-Austin.

Supported by Research. Recent third-party studies have found that TFA’s selection model successfully identifies teachers who will have a positive impact on student achievement.⁴ The study also found that the TFA selection model is helping to predict which teachers will be most successful in their first year of teaching. These findings are especially significant when considering there is limited evidence in general on the factors that predict teacher effectiveness.

Diversity. TFA accomplishes this selectivity while also recruiting a highly diverse cohort. Our corps is significantly more diverse than the student body of traditional education degree programs– with more than twice as many participants identifying as African American and Latino.⁵ While recognizing that low-income students are well served by teachers of all racial

⁴Dobbie, W. (2011). *Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement: Evidence from Teach For America*. <http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/teachercharacteristicsjuly2011.pdf>

Bastian, Kevin. (2013). *Do Teachers’ Non-Cognitive Skills and Traits Predict Effectiveness and Instructional Practice?* Unpublished paper presented at the American Education Finance Policy Conference, New Orleans, LA.

⁵2013 Professional Education Data System (PEDS) Report-American Association of Colleges for Education – 6% and 4.2% of participants in schools of education identify as African American and Latino, respectively. We compared with 12.9% and 9% of TFA’s 2012 corps.

backgrounds, TFA believes there is the potential for added value in increasing the number of corps members who share the racial and economic backgrounds of the children they teach.

Proven effectiveness. In every state that has conducted an analysis of the relative effectiveness of teacher pathways, TFA is among the top teacher providers in the state – signifying the effectiveness of TFA’s selection model and teacher training program. Research has shown that TFA corps members have a greater impact on student achievement than participants from other programs (including university-based teacher education programs). This is true across various school settings – urban and rural – and all grade levels and subject areas.

North Carolina: In this analysis of 12 teacher-preparation programs conducted by UNC, TFA was identified as the most effective teacher provider program for early-career teachers in North Carolina Public Schools for each of the three years this analysis has been conducted. In every grade level and subject studied, with data from urban and rural settings, TFA corps members did as well as or better than the traditionally prepared UNC graduates. In their 2012 analysis, the authors found that across 129 teacher effectiveness comparisons (including an analysis of student achievement), TFA teachers were more effective in 73% of all comparisons and were equally as effective in the remaining 27%.⁶

Tennessee: TFA was identified as the top teacher-preparation program in Tennessee for the past three years that the state has conducted its analysis of more than 40 teacher-preparation programs. The data shows that TFA teachers in Tennessee had a statistically significant positive impact on student achievement in every evaluated subject – math, language arts, science, and social studies.⁷

⁶Henry, G. T., Thompson, C.L., Bastian, K.C., Fortner, C.K., Kershaw, D.C., Purtell, K.M., & Zulli, R.A. (2010). *Portal Report: Teacher preparation and student test scores in North Carolina*. Carolina Institute for Public Policy. Chapel Hill, NC

⁷Tennessee Higher Education Commission (2010, 2011), *Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs*, Nashville, TN

Louisiana: In 2009, the state of Louisiana conducted a value-added study of teacher preparation programs. The results of this analysis found that TFA corps members were more effective than other first-year teachers, and indicate that TFA teachers' effectiveness is more similar to the effectiveness of veteran teachers than it is to that of new teachers.⁸

TFA's proven ability to produce teachers who are more likely to positively affect student achievement than other new teachers, and in some cases veteran teachers, indicates that investing in TFA's teacher training program will result in an increased number of effective teachers for high-need students, thus furthering the aims of the SEED program.

A.2 – Development and Advancement of Theory, Knowledge, and Practices

By supporting the execution and improvement of one of the nation's largest teacher preparation programs, which is exclusively focused on training beginning teachers to serve high-need students effectively, this SEED project will yield new insights, knowledge, and practices that will enrich TFA's and the field's understanding of how to prepare new teachers for success in this context.

Institutes, as described in Section B, first and foremost prepare corps members to teach effectively. However, as controlled settings where significant amounts of observation, feedback, and coaching are happening as novice teachers work to rapidly invest their students and improve their practice, they also offer a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding of teacher training and student learning. They are a forum for testing and developing new theories, frameworks, and resources as we work to evolve our teacher development model. For example, we are seeing increasing evidence of the importance of creating a classroom with a strong "Culture of Achievement," where students are passionate, urgent, joyful, caring, and "on a

⁸Noell, G.H., & Gansle, K.A. (2009). Teach for America Teachers' Contribution to Student Achievement in Louisiana in Grades 4-9: 2004-2005 to 2006-2007. Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA.

mission” towards a destination that matters to their futures. Under this project, we will test some of our emerging hypotheses around how best to equip corps members to build strong classroom cultures and invest their students in ways that inspire and motivate them to work hard and achieve their goals. Lessons learned from piloting these trainings and resources will not only inform future TFA trainings and ongoing support structures but also will be incorporated into future theory, frameworks, and resources that will be developed and shared across the TFA network and publicly.

Moreover, as part of this project, we will develop and test a range of Common Core-aligned trainings and resources – drawing on best practices and existing resources in the field while also creating our own trainings and collaborating with Relay Graduate School of Education to develop online math content modules. As educators and administrators in states across the country are preparing to integrate the Common Core standards (and assessments) into their curricula and support their teachers in making these changes, the products and the lessons learned from this pilot would contribute significantly to practical advances in the field, especially for our many school district and university partners nationwide.

Finally, it is worth noting that TFA has a track record of innovative partnerships with schools of education to share, advance, and sometimes co-develop theory, knowledge, and practice related to teacher preparation. For example, at the Arizona State University’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (ASU), we have worked closely with faculty to develop the Sanford Inspire Program, which aims to redefine teacher preparation by adapting key components of TFA’s recruitment, selection, and training models in order to produce teachers of the highest caliber. The program utilizes collateral materials, videos, and assignments produced for the TFA institutes; ASU faculty members observe at TFA’s Phoenix institute, and serve as a conduit of

best practice between the two organizations. Separately, we are working with researchers at the University of Washington (UW) to re-envision the design and implementation of pre-service teacher education. This work will no doubt be influenced and informed by the lessons learned and new resources developed during this SEED project, and these partnerships suggest that there is interest in and demand for our knowledge of and practical experience with teacher preparation. As schools of education are under increasing pressure to provide more rigorous instruction to prepare teachers to equip *all* students with the skills, knowledge, and mindsets they will need for success in the modern world, opportunities for shared learning and efficient knowledge and resource development across teacher preparation programs becomes increasingly important.⁹

A.3 – Magnitude of Outcomes

In addition to the scale and scope, selectivity, diversity, proven effectiveness, and capacity to advance the field (as described in Sections A.1 and A.2), the magnitude and importance of TFA’s teacher preparation program are further evidenced by our success in meeting some of education’s most intractable challenges, including: (1) addressing the effects of summer learning loss through individualized summer school instruction; (2) producing highly effective teachers for high-needs classrooms nationwide; and (3) developing our corps members into educational leaders oriented towards achieving dramatic student learning gains.

Addressing summer learning loss. Summer learning loss has been well documented, particularly for children from low-income backgrounds. A 1996 meta-analysis found that summer school programs that were characterized by individualized instruction for students and

⁹ Levine, A. (2006). *Educating school teachers*. Washington, D.C: The Education School Project. <http://www.edschools.org/pdf/Teachersadvance2.pdf>.
Otterman, S. (July 21, 2011). Ed schools pedagogical puzzle. *The New York Times* http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/24/education/edlife/edl-24teacher-t.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

close monitoring of progress were associated with greater effectiveness.¹⁰ As a key component of their 5-week institute program, corps members receive intensive pedagogical and content instruction that they apply with summer school students. Summer school teaching at institute is structured to provide individual instruction and close monitoring of progress. Moreover, as we pilot new institute models, we anticipate that closer partnerships with host schools will lead to innovations in program design that are even more explicitly aimed at helping meet the needs of summer school students and addressing the persistent challenge of summer learning loss.

Highly effective teachers for high-needs students. In addition to the teacher pathway studies, there are a number of rigorous, independent studies that are providing a growing body of evidence demonstrating TFA corps members' impact on student achievement.

A 2004 independent, experimental study conducted by Mathematica Policy Research found that, despite working in the highest-need classrooms in the country, TFA corps members advanced students against the national norm in both reading and math, and that corps members “produced higher test scores than the other teachers in their schools – not just other novice teachers or uncertified teachers, but also veterans and certified teachers.”¹¹

In 2008-09, the Urban Institute conducted a methodologically rigorous, quasi-experimental study of the impact of TFA corps members on high school students by analyzing end-of-course student exam data from 2000 through 2006 in North Carolina. This analysis found that the positive impact of having a TFA teacher exceeded that associated with having a teacher with three or more years of experience.¹²

¹⁰ Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., & Greathouse, S. (1996). The effects of summer vacation on achievement test scores: A narrative and meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 66, 227-268.

¹¹ Decker, P.T., Mayer, D. P., & Glazerman, S. (June 2004). The Effects of TFA on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation. *Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.* p 48.

¹² Xu, Z., Hannaway, J., Taylor, C. 2011. Making a Difference?: The Effect of Teach for America on Student Performance in High School. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30(3), 447-469. Washington, DC

A lasting commitment to improving student achievement. TFA teachers have a demonstrated history of effecting student achievement gains in large part because TFA’s teacher training program is explicitly dedicated to producing teachers oriented towards achieving dramatic student gains each year they are in the classroom. The TFA corps member experience, beginning with TFA’s summer training institute, is designed to deeply influence the personal and professional lives of corps members during and after their commitment. Although only 15% of incoming corps members report that teaching was one of their top career options, over 65% of TFA alumni stay in education after completing their commitments. They continue teaching, become school and district leaders, work in education-related non-profits, and take on other roles in the education field. By strengthening our teacher training programs, an investment of SEED funding will better equip these future leaders to advance our nation toward the day when all children have access to a high quality education.

SECTION B: QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND SERVICES

B.1 – Project Design, Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

The proposed SEED project would enable TFA to design, implement, and evaluate 11 summer training institutes in 2013 and an estimated 14 summer institutes in 2014, preparing a total of approximately 12,500 incoming corps members to enter high-need classrooms. This project also includes two new institute initiatives that we are seeking SEED support to help develop and pilot – regional training institutes and aligning institute training curriculum and resources with Common Core standards (see Section B.3 for additional context).

The following table summarizes the key objectives, measures, and quantitative goals associated with the project, including the percentage of teachers trained through this project who demonstrate evidence of being highly effective first year teachers during the 2013-14 and 2014-

15 school years. Below the table, we describe exactly what happens at summer training institutes and what the regional training institute and Common Core-alignment pilots entail.

Table 1 – Project Objectives, Measures, and Goals

Design, plan, implement, and evaluate summer training institutes		
Objective	Measures	Goals¹³
Implement summer institutes to prepare and retain first year corps members to teach in low-income communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of institutes • # of first year corps members • % of corps members that begin institute who become first year teachers 	2013: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 institutes • 6,000 corps members • 95% retention rate 2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 institutes • 6,500 corps members • 95% retention rate
Corps members develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed to be effective beginning teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of corps members leading summer school classrooms with demonstrated cultures of achievement (CoA) • % of corps members with summer school classrooms with demonstrated engagement with rigorous content (EWRC) during institute 	2013 Corps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% demonstrated CoA • 75% demonstrated EWRC 2014 Corps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% demonstrated CoA • 76% demonstrated EWRC
Evaluate teacher performance and identify the percentage of highly effective teachers, according to student growth ¹⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of “highly effective” first-year corps members (2013-14 school year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% of first year corps members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of “highly effective” & “effective” first-year corps members (2013-14 school year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% of first year corps members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of “highly effective” first-year corps members (2014-15 school year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38% of first year corps members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of “highly effective” & “effective” first-year corps members (2014-15 school year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77% of first year corps members
Deliver a cost effective, high-quality teacher preparation program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated cost per participant at institute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,000
Pilot (design, plan, implement, and evaluate) regional training institutes		
Objective	Measures	Goals

¹³These goals are inclusive of all corps member; they do not distinguish between corps members trained at national or regional training institutes.

¹⁴In each case, the goal is for the percent of highly effective and effective corps members out of the set of corps members for whom we are able to obtain sufficient student achievement data to judge performance relative to top-performing teachers. Our goal is to have sufficient data for 85% of our corps. In 2010-11, analysis showed that the corps members for whom we had data were representative of the corps overall.

Support development and testing of regional institute pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of regions with viable regional training institute proposals • # of corps members participating in regional training institutes 	<p>For summer 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 regional institutes • 300 corps members <p>For summer 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 regional institutes • 700 corps members
Evaluate impact of regional institute pilots on corps strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % average corps strength index (CSI) score for regional institute pilots as compared with national institutes 	<p>2013 – The average CSI score for regional institute pilots exceeds the score for national institutes by 1%</p> <p>2014 – The average CSI score for regional institute pilots exceeds the score for national institutes by 1%</p>
Align summer institute curriculum and resources with the Common Core		
Objective	Measures	Goals
Support development and testing of integrating Common Core standards more robustly into institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of regional training institutes piloting national approach to Common Core integration 	<p>2013 – 0</p> <p>2014 – 2</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of grade levels/subject areas covered by comprehensive, revamped Common Core-aligned training resources 	<p>2013 – 0</p> <p>2014 – 6</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of online, Common Core-aligned secondary math modules available as resource to all institutes 	<p>2013 – 0</p> <p>2014 – 36</p>
Demonstrable impact on corps members' teaching during 2014-15 school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of corps members with exposure to Common Core aligned training • % of corps members with classrooms that demonstrate integration of Common Core during First 8 Weeks teaching 	<p>2014 – 150 corps members</p> <p>To be determined as pilot develops (see Section E).</p>

Summer Training Institutes: This project focuses primarily on designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating TFA's summer institutes, which provide the teacher training that is foundational to TFA's proven approach to developing effective novice teachers. After successfully completing a rigorous selection process, but before being placed as teachers in low-income classrooms throughout the country, TFA corps members must complete an intensive, experiential, and outcome-oriented teacher training program. This program spans seven weeks

and, as evidenced by the studies described in Section A, it results in the majority of participants being on the path to becoming effective first year teachers at the end of the training program.

There are four major components of TFA's teacher training program: (1) **Pre-Institute Work** – Once accepted into TFA, corps members are given 40 hours of TFA-designed pre-work composed of readings, classroom observations, and reflection exercises designed to ensure that corps members are able to maximize their seven-week training experience; (2) **Induction** – At the beginning of the summer, TFA corps members spend a week living in and learning about the communities in which they will teach. TFA currently places teachers in 46 communities (called regions) throughout 35 states across the country; (3) **Institute** – Next, corps members attend a rigorous, five-week, residential training institute to prepare them for teaching in a low-income classroom. There are two main components of institute: teaching summer school and participating in teacher training sessions. Corps members live and eat together on host university campuses. Institutes are designed, planned, and executed by TFA staff; (4) **Orientation** – Corps members return to their regions and, building on their institute training, create unit plans, assessments, and tools to track their students' progress. With these elements established, TFA corps members are prepared to move their students forward starting on day one. The SEED project focuses on institute (including pre-institute work).

Institute pre-work. Pre-work is comprised of a series of readings, reflection questions and activities, classroom observations, and practical skill mastery that focus on helping corps members understand the systemic causes of the achievement gap and the kind of leadership that is required to mitigate them. We believe that by grappling with the causes and consequences of educational inequity and having corps members consider who they are as leaders, corps members will arrive in the classroom better positioned to be advocates for students and families.

Institute. In partnership with school districts and university hosts, we operate five-week training institutes for new corps members, scheduling 14-hour days that result in the equivalent of approximately nine weeks of learning. The two key components of institute are teaching summer school and participating in teacher training sessions. Both of these components are supported by two critical resources – the Teaching As Leadership (TAL) Framework and Impact Model and Institute Student Achievement Toolkits.

Summer school teaching. Teaching in summer school classrooms provides corps members with an authentic teaching environment similar to the classrooms in which they will teach independently in the fall. Corps members work collaboratively in teams of three-to-four to lead an entire class to master academic content (taking turns teaching and engaging in team teaching), while building their own skills in delivering lessons and managing a classroom. Additionally, most corps members gain experience leading group work by pulling out a small group of students for concentrated math and reading skill-building.

All corps members receive an Institute Student Achievement Toolkit (ISAT) that contains a set of essential performance-support tools to help corps members achieve significant gains with their students during the institute teaching experience. ISATs are aligned with state standards; they are grade- and content-area specific; and they include goals for student achievement in summer school, a unit plan or guidance on creating a unit plan, diagnostic and final assessments with answer key, tools to track student performance, and sample lesson plans.

Corps members are closely supervised and regularly observed by TFA staff members, Corps Member Advisors (CMAs), and veteran district teachers. CMAs observe each corps member several times a week and provide feedback to develop pedagogical knowledge and

skills. Veteran teachers from local districts monitor corps members working with students, and provide regular feedback throughout the summer.

Corps members receive extensive practice in lesson planning, and their plans are reviewed by CMAs and other TFA staff members. Additionally, corps members meet in small groups to practice teaching new lessons, problem-solve around classroom management dilemmas, discuss feedback they have received, and analyze student progress. Corps members leave these small group sessions with clear direction that they use to improve their teaching.

Observation and feedback is guided by TFA's Teaching As Leadership (TAL) Framework and the TAL Impact Model (Appendix E.1). TAL distills 20 years of observation in thousands of classrooms into six general principles that characterize outstanding teachers: setting big goals, investing students and others, planning purposefully, executing effectively, continuously increasing effectiveness, and working relentlessly. The TAL Impact Model outlines key teacher mindsets – holding high expectations for students, assuming personal responsibility for their students' success, and feeling a true connection with and caring for students and their families – as well as student actions, behaviors, and outcomes that should be observable when corps members are truly embodying the TAL leadership principles. CMAs observe corps member and student actions and behaviors to determine corps member impact and effectiveness.

Teacher training sessions. The TAL Framework also shapes the teacher training sessions of institute. Institute coursework is designed to help corps members establish a vision for outcomes in their summer school classrooms, and learn essential teaching frameworks, curricula, and lesson planning skills, strengthening their leadership mindsets and abilities. Curriculum topics include instructional planning and delivery; classroom management and culture; literacy development; and strategies for promoting diversity, community, and achievement.

As a result of pre-work, teacher training sessions, the summer school teaching experience, and continuous coaching and cycles of feedback, corps members emerge from institute with the following key mindsets, skills, and knowledge that we believe prepare them to be successful in their own classrooms:

Mindsets	Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom management is essential to student achievement • Goal-oriented planning is critical to successful instruction • Culture is important to my students' academic success • Holding truly high expectations – academic and behavioral – for all students is critical • I am the leader that is responsible for my students' success • Feeling a true connection with and caring for students and their families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to design content, processes, and products applicable to a general group of students • Able to craft plans based on student diagnostic data and/or goals • Able to design efficient plans so that he/she can offer support to individual students when the whole class is working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to assist students in achieving academic growth • Understand what it takes to close the achievement gap (by setting big goals for student achievement) • Assist students in believing in their own abilities, maintaining high expectations for themselves (students), and develop a desire to pursue goals that are important to them

While the primary framework and components of our pre-service training remain consistent year over year, we are also continuously striving to increase quality as we learn more about what is useful (through both qualitative and quantitative feedback), as we refine our understanding of effective teaching and learning, and as the external landscape changes. Two priority initiatives we will pursue as part of this SEED project include piloting regional training institutes and aligning summer institute tools and resources with the Common Core.

Regional Training Institutes. Historically, TFA institutes have been designed and managed entirely by the national team, serving several cohorts of corps members who were being trained to teach in low-income communities across multiple states and regions. In 2013, supported in part by this project, most corps members will still attend one of 9 “national” institutes – for example, the Atlanta Institute will train new corps members who will be teaching in Atlanta, New Orleans, Nashville, and Southwest Ohio. Other national institutes will take place

in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Mississippi Delta, New York, Phoenix, Philadelphia, and Tulsa. With support from the SEED program, we will also pilot two new regional training institutes in Memphis and Jacksonville (each institute will train only those corps members who are teaching in that community) in 2013 and in three additional regions in 2014.

By design, no two regional institutes will look the same as one goal of this approach is to provide regions with the autonomy and flexibility to develop a model that is uniquely tailored to the local context. However, all regional institutes will share the following critical foundational elements that underpin our proven national teacher preparation model:

- At least 30-35 hours of pre-institute work, followed by a 5-week intensive teacher training institute that is bounded by formal induction and orientation
- Corps members teach summer school students under the supervision of TFA staff and a district teacher, who provide feedback and coaching and help ensure quality
- Corps members attend course seminars and workshops to build and apply knowledge, and have time for reflection, reviewing student work, planning, and practicing new skills
- Curriculum is grounded in TAL and designed to integrate seamlessly into the overall TFA program model – from recruitment through support in the classroom and beyond

At the same time, regional institutes will differ from national institutes in the following ways:

- Participants – All participants in the regional training will begin teaching in that same region when the school year begins.
- Partnerships – Regional leadership, rather than national institute staff, will be responsible for developing and executing strong partnerships with the local host university and the school(s)/school district(s) where participants will teach summer school.

- *Vision and Design* – Host regions will be responsible for developing a vision for a regional summer training institute that is clearly grounded in the local context and aspirations for students and schools. Regions will also design and deliver an instructional program that builds on the existing TFA curriculum and resources while making adaptations to better integrate training with the two years of ongoing support, and better equip corps members to teach and lead effectively in their schools and communities.
- *Staffing and Execution* – Host regions will be responsible for developing and executing a staffing model and operational plan to deliver the highest quality training experience.

Regions participating in this pilot will be responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating their regional training institute with significant guidance, support, and resources from the National Design, Institute, and Institute Operations teams as described in Section C.

Common Core Alignment. As part of this SEED project, in 2014, we will utilize select new regional summer training institutes as pilot sites for testing a subset of integrated, high-quality, TFA-created Common-Core aligned tools and trainings for corps members across at least 6 discrete grade levels/subject matters. Until recently, the integration of Common Core into summer institutes has been primarily decentralized, reactive, and largely driven by the needs and demands of TFA’s partner schools and districts where incoming corps members teach summer school. The central mechanism for addressing the Common Core has been adapting the ISATs, and individual institutes have outsourced this work to local contractors to meet the baseline requirements of the district. This reality has led to significant variance in the quality of the resources developed, the scope of grades and subjects covered, and the level of adoption across the country. The major exception is in the area of Secondary English Language Arts– we have dedicated national design resources towards increasing the rigor and expectations for secondary

literacy in our corps member classrooms and piloted Common Core aligned tools and trainings at select institutes last year. Additionally, we have created some aligned math resources that were part of a pilot to improve our preparation of high school math teachers. Yet even in these areas, we see the need and opportunity to revamp our approach to preparing corps members for the Common Core and ensure we are holding our corps members and their students to the highest standards for the deep conceptual learning that the Common Core initiative aspires to achieve.

As part of this project, resources designed for each grade/subject will include the following:

- Overhauled ISATs: New or improved Common Core-aligned ISAT resources (i.e. goals for student achievement in summer school, unit plans, assessments, tools to track student performance, and sample lesson plans) will be developed for all pilot grades/subjects. ISAT resources will be expanded to include Common Core-aligned lesson plans and materials for all objectives including videos and student work samples for select lessons.
- New and Revamped Training Sessions and Learning Experiences: New content-specific training sessions will be designed around the revised and expanded ISAT resources. Additionally, our Common Core-aligned, content-specific training will include an “execution-first” approach to training wherein corps members are first led through the process of internalizing and successfully executing quality plans before being asked to create their own lesson plans.
- Videos and Lab Classrooms: Pilot sites will utilize video and likely lab classrooms – where expert teachers steeped in the Common Core teach or co-teach lessons – to model exceptional teaching, demonstrate high expectations, utilize in feedback and coaching sessions, and reinforce quality execution.

We aim to develop and test this approach across three elementary grades (integrated across math and literacy), one middle school, and one high school ELA grade level and Algebra 1. We will implement a combination of the above resources across a mix of these grades and subjects at two regional training institutes in 2014 to begin assessing their effectiveness in preparing teachers to teach Common Core successfully. The lessons learned from these pilots will inform the development of future Common Core-aligned institute resources for all subjects and grade levels, which will ultimately be made available to all institute sites.

Moreover, while we are developing the above resources and trainings, we will also be partnering with Relay Graduate School of Education to complete the creation of 36 Common Core-aligned online content modules for all high school math subjects. These modules will provide significant support for corps members who are seeking to understand key mathematical concepts and illustrate, through annotated classroom planning resources, proven best practices for teaching specific content. For example, if a new corps member will be teaching systems of equations during summer school at institute, his Corps Member Adviser could recommend he complete the module before he starts planning to facilitate his understanding the content deeply and mastering key strategies for teaching it. These modules will be available and promoted to all institutes as a planning and training resource in advance of the 2014 Institutes.

B.2 – Comprehensive Effort

The TFA program represents a comprehensive effort to improving teaching and learning and supporting rigorous academic standards for students. This project supports a foundational element of the TFA program continuum – the development and implementation of our teacher training model. Thus, this project is an essential part of TFA’s comprehensive efforts.

TFA program as a comprehensive effort. Alongside many others, TFA is growing the movement of effective teachers and leaders working to ensure that students growing up in poverty receive an excellent, academically rigorous education. We pursue this mission by recruiting, selecting, training, placing, and supporting outstanding college graduates and professionals who commit to teaching at least two years in low-income schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to expand educational equity. This comprehensive approach both improves teaching and learning, and supports rigorous academic standards through the development and work of TFA corps members and alumni.

TFA expands the pipeline of teachers *and* leaders – at every level of education, policy, and within other sectors – who are committed to tackling educational inequity, improving teaching and learning, and supporting rigorous academic standards. We expand this pipeline by: (1) recruiting and developing teachers who most likely would not otherwise have entered the classroom (; and (2) explicitly orienting our program efforts toward developing corps members as leaders with an emphasis on having the highest expectations for academic achievement in their classrooms despite the challenges of poverty that their students face.

The vast majority of corps members bring this orientation to bear on classrooms, schools, school systems, and low income communities both during and after their two-year teaching commitment. A recent study found that participating in TFA significantly increases racial tolerance, makes individuals much more optimistic about the life-chances of children living in poverty, and makes them much more likely to work in education.¹⁵

In the short term, research shows that TFA corps members have a greater impact on student achievement than other new teachers and bring a sense of urgency to their classrooms

¹⁵Fryer, Roland G., Jr. and Dobbie, Will. Harvard University. “The Impact of Voluntary Service on Future Outcomes: Evidence from Teach For America.” September 2011.

and schools. In the long-term, TFA alumni represent a critical source of talent for schools, school systems, policy and advocacy organizations, nonprofits, and other positions and organizations impacting PK-12 education. For example, nearly 2 out of 3 alumni work in the field of education, and half of those as teachers; more than 80% of alumni have jobs that impact the field of education or education issues; and about 87% of alumni are engaged in mission-aligned work – working in education, studying education full time, or working in a job that impacts education and/or low-income communities. A recent study found that more founders and leaders of education organizations participate in TFA than in any other organization or program.¹⁶

Shaped by their corps experience, alumni are exerting strong leadership across PK-12 education to effect the fundamental changes necessary to achieve educational opportunity for all. These alumni include: Tennessee Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman – a first round Race to the Top recipient; Colorado State Senator Michael Johnston – who ensured the passage of legislation that revolutionized teacher and principal accountability by measuring performance in part by student growth; KIPP Co-Founders Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin – one of the largest and highest impact charter networks in the country; and DC Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson – one of the largest school districts in the country.

Thus, TFA's approach is enduring and comprehensive in scope – producing teachers and leaders who influence educational practice and policy at all levels, tackle systemic challenges, and create a context for PK-12 education that fosters high expectations, effective teaching and learning, and academic rigor.

The SEED project's role in TFA's comprehensive approach. TFA's teacher training efforts are a key component of our overall program continuum – from recruitment through alumni development – that underpins our comprehensive approach to expanding educational

¹⁶Higgins, M., Hess, R. Wiender, J., & Robison, W. (2011). Creating a Corps of Change Agents – TFA Alumni Project. *Education Next*.

opportunity. Without capacity to design and deliver high-quality pre-service training, we could not recruit the same profile and caliber of participants; nor would schools and school districts seek to hire our corps members. Institute is a foundational venue, necessary for beginning to instill the key mindsets, knowledge, and skills that ensure corps members are effective in their classrooms. The first step in becoming lifelong advocate for educational equity is being an effective teacher, and the institute experience is the critical first step in that process.

Thus, the proposed SEED project is a discrete but essential piece of TFA's comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students in low-income communities through the informed leadership, commitment, and instructional practice of TFA corps members and alumni.

B.3 – Sufficient Quality, Intensity, and Duration

TFA's training institutes, which are the centerpiece of this SEED project, are foundational to TFA's proven approach to developing effective novice teachers. We have confidence in the quality, intensity, and duration of our model and summer institutes for at least three reasons.

First, as described in Section A, statewide studies of teacher preparation pathways consistently show that TFA is among the top teacher providers in the state in terms of student achievement – signifying the effectiveness of TFA's selection model and teacher training program across various school settings, grade levels, and subject.

Second, as described in Section B.1, our training program is grounded in and guided by the Teaching As Leadership (TAL) Framework. With support from the Gates Foundation and in partnership with the Gates Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project, we recently completed a rigorous, multi-year study of the effectiveness of the TAL rubric to better

understand which teacher actions are most predictive of teacher quality, as measured by impact on student achievement. This study found that four of the six TAL leadership principles were robustly correlated with teacher effectiveness as measured by value-added scores. See Appendix E.2 for an overview of this study. This study supports our experience in corps members' classrooms – TAL contributes significantly to the quality of TFA's teacher training program.

Third, principals express a high level of satisfaction with TFA corps members and the program. They report that TFA teachers are well-prepared, that corps members have a positive impact on their schools and on student achievement, and that they would hire another corps member if there were another vacancy. See Appendix E.3 for an overview of the findings from the 2011 Principals Survey. While principals' overall satisfaction with TFA corps members and the program certainly reflects on more than just pre-service training, the fact that principals would hire another corps member and that the majority rate our corps members' training as more effective than that of other new teachers speaks to the quality of our training program.

Furthermore, as part of our commitment to innovation and continuous improvement, both of the pilot efforts included in this project – regional training institutes and Common Core alignment – have significant potential to increase the quality, intensity, and duration of our already successful approach to pre-service training, thus leading to additional improvements in practice amongst corps member participants.

Increased Quality. By shifting the responsibility for partnering with host schools and districts from national institute staff to local regional staff who work closely with school and district leadership throughout the school year, the regional training institute model creates new opportunities for more strategic, innovative, and enduring collaboration that should lead to even higher quality programming and greater impact on both corps members and students. Regional

institute partnerships could include explicit joint efforts to battle summer learning loss, integrate teacher training structures and resources, engage teachers and staff more effectively, share best practices, and more. For example, in developing its 2013 pilot, TFA-Memphis has entered into a close partnership with the Tennessee Achievement School District and several charter schools to develop a summer school program to establish and meet shared goals for student summer learning and teacher training.

Furthermore, the revamped, Common Core-aligned training sessions and tools we will develop and pilot have the potential to increase the overall quality of institute trainings on at least two levels – (1) bringing increased, consistent rigor and expectations for deep conceptual student learning to summer institute tools, training sessions, and learning experiences; and (2) testing a new “execution-first” approach to effectively internalizing content-specific, Common Core-aligned teaching practices. Furthermore, in addition to our partnership with Relay to develop high quality, cutting edge online content modules, we are seeking to partner with colleagues from the University of Washington’s UACT program to learn from and integrate portions of their effective approach into our institute.

Increased Intensity. Not surprisingly, recent internal TFA analyses have demonstrated that the “authenticity” of the institute teaching experience has an impact on corps member effectiveness and on corps culture. We evaluate “authenticity” by considering the following factors that relate to the intensity of the teaching experience and how similar the institute teaching experience is to the corps member’s experience as a first year teacher: Authentic content – teaching the same subject at institute as in the region, level of rigor of curriculum; authentic audience – teaching the same grade-level at institute as in the region, number of students per classroom; authentic teaching format – lead teaching vs. co-teaching vs. small group

instruction; authentic “quantity” of teaching – number of teaching days and hours; authentic school environment – teaching at the same school type at institute as in the region.

Analysis of 2011 and 2012 institute data showed that the authenticity of the teaching format, the quantity of teaching, and the audience has a statistically significant impact on corps member effectiveness with institute students. Additionally, teaching the same subject and/or grade-level and the average number of students are significantly statistically related to strengthening corps culture, especially over time.

Given these findings, TFA is focusing on identifying ways to increase the authenticity, and thus intensity, of the summer school teaching experience across all summer institutes. Regional training institute pilots may present the greatest opportunity to do so – the fact that corps members will be teaching summer school in the same community where they will become full-time teachers in the fall should increase the chances of more authentic institute teaching experiences, potentially across all of the above factors. Add to that the greater authenticity of the overall regional institute experience – whereby corps members gain immediate, deep exposure to the region where they will teach – we believe that participants will have an overall more positively intense experience.

Increased Duration. As described above, TFA’s centralized national institute model consists of a 5-week institute bounded by pre-work and regional inductions and orientations. With scheduled 14 hour days during the standard 5-week institute, participants are receiving the equivalent of 9 weeks of learning given the intensity of the program. Notably, with regional training institutes, there is the potential to integrate induction, institute, and orientation into a more cohesive 7-week experience with greater intensity and duration than the national model.

Therefore, in addition to the discrete innovations and improvements all of our summer institute teams are continuously pursuing, we believe the new approaches we will pilot with support from the SEED project will ultimately increase the quality, duration, intensity, and sustainability of our already successful model, leading to better outcomes for students and enabling corps members to become more effective first year teachers.

SECTION C: QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PERSONNEL

C.1 – Qualifications of Key Project Personnel & Time Commitments

This project will be managed and executed primarily through the collaborative efforts of three National teams – the Office of Institutes (OOI) team; National Institute Operations (NIO) team; and the Teacher Preparation, Support, and Development (TPSD) team – working closely with part-time seasonal staff and TFA regional leadership.

The OOI team is the national management team that is ultimately responsible for effective implementation of the SEED project. OOI provides guidance and oversight to all institutes to ensure they are planning and executing effectively to create the institute experience and outcomes outlined in Section B. Each centralized national institute has a full-time, five-person Institute Management Team (IMT) that sits on the OOI team, and is charged with: setting the vision for that institute, working with school partners and the TSPD Design team to design curriculum and sessions, working with the NIO team to ensure institute operations run smoothly, and hires and trains seasonal staff. The IMT oversees the management and professional development of over 100 full-time and seasonal staff members (per institute) to ensure that they are prepared and working effectively with corps members.

The NIO team supports IMTs in managing the logistics of running institutes – hiring seasonal staff, contracting with university partners for food and lodging services, securing busing

to transport corps members from university lodging to summer school sites, etc. By developing systems, processes and tools, the NIO team optimizes organizational and financial efficiencies, facilitates effective communications across internal teams, and leverages technology to support our staff and corps members.

The TPSD Design team develops teacher training and staff professional development frameworks and materials for institute, and drives innovation. They are responsible for the design and implementation of the TAL Framework, and the development of the Institute Student Achievement Toolkits (ISATs). Additionally, the Design team is responsible for the Common Core work described in Section B. The TPSD Strategy team gathers and analyzes data related to our performance metrics; this 14-person branch of the TPSD team provides the resources necessary to conduct the project evaluation (explained in greater detail in Section E).

In addition to full-time staff, we also hire seasonal staff that work at and manage each summer school site. They are collectively responsible for training corps members and effectively running the summer school program. Seasonal staff members are recruited, selected, trained, and employed by TFA and ultimately managed by the IMT; key positions include: School Directors – the leaders of each school site that partner with district administrators on instruction, discipline, and operations (typically one SD per 50-60 corps members); Corps Member Advisors – the primary coach and mentor for corps members; they observe corps members teaching, provide feedback, and conduct training sessions on instructional strategies (typically one CMA per 12 corps members); Curriculum Specialists– deliver high-impact content sessions to develop corps member knowledge base and facilitate large-group discussions (typically one CS per school site); School Operations Managers – ensure the school site runs smoothly; work in partnership with the district administrator at the school site (typically one SOM per school site).

Finally, national institute teams work closely with regional leadership to ensure successful management and implementation of regional training institutes. Memphis and Jacksonville have been selected as sites of the regional summer training institutes in 2013. They were selected based on compelling proposals for how piloting a regional training institute would advance their regional vision for ensuring educational excellence and equity of all children, as well as evidence of strong partnerships with local university and school/ district partners. Any region interested in pursuing a regional training institute pilot will be required to submit a similar proposal. Once selected, these regions will receive the following supports from the national teams: access to both design and execution resources; opportunity to participate in retreats, conferences, and other in-person experiences that will help regions further develop and build out their vision for pre-service; and individual consulting with national team experts as needed.

The key project personnel listed below lead the national institute teams. Individually and collectively, they bring a wealth of experience with TFA’s training program, curriculum development, and designing and managing large-scale projects (see Appendix A for resumes).

Key Project Personnel		
Name & Title	Project Responsibilities & Time Commitment¹⁷	Relevant experience
Michael Aronson, Senior Vice President, Institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Director Leads the OOI team 100% dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 years of experience with TFA’s training efforts, including head of NYC Institute ’02 corps member in Newark
Tim Hughes, Vice President, Institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OOI team leader – manages five IMTs 100% dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founding head of IMT for the Mississippi Delta Institute Principal, KIPP SF Bay Academy ’02 corps member in Baltimore
Min Kim, Senior Vice President, Operations – TPSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads NIO 30% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led the reorganization of the NYC DOE’s HR department encompassing 150,000 employees

¹⁷ Time commitments included in this proposal represent the time committed to the actual project – the planning, design, execution, and evaluation of summer institutes, including piloting regional institutes and new Common Core-aligned trainings and resources. These percentages do not necessarily reflect the percent of effort for each individual included in the budget. As described in Section D on Sustainability, the total costs of this project exceed the grant request; the balance of the project, and thus of personnel’s dedicated time, will be covered by private philanthropy and in some instances state funding or district fees.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant with L.E.K. Consulting
Annie Lewis O'Donnell, Senior Vice President, Design – TPSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the Corps Member Design team 60% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 years with the Design team, including overhauling training for elementary literacy Leads 20-person team of designers to develop training materials and curriculum for corps members '01 corps member in Baltimore
Kelvey Oeser, Vice President, Design – TPSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the Staff Design team 30% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads 12-person team of designers to develop training and curriculum for institute staff members Part of founding Phoenix IMT Managed \$30 million STEM initiative through TX Education Agency '01 corps member in Los Angeles
Ted Quinn, Senior Vice President, Strategy & Research – TPSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the TPSD Strategy team 10% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate Principal with McKinsey & Co. PhD in Physics from the University of Chicago
Kate Kavouras, Managing Director, Public Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Project Director Ensures programmatic and fiscal grants management 20% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured and managed over twenty public grants for TFA Director of Programming at the Academy for Social Action responsible for designing curriculum and efficiency systems '05 New York City corps member

C.2 – Management Plan

There are three key objectives we will achieve to successfully execute this SEED project:

- (1) design, plan, implement, and evaluate summer training institutes; (2) pilot regional training institutes; and (3) align summer institute curriculum and resources with the Common Core.

Management Plan		
Objective	TFA successfully designs, plans, implements, and evaluates summer training institutes in 2013 and 2014	
Owner	Michael Aronson	
Successfully implement summer training institutes in 2013 and 2014, and evaluate its impact on teacher effectiveness during 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years		
Responsibilities	Timeline	Milestones
Ensure corps members are developing the key mindsets, skills, and habits of successful teachers	May – Aug 2013 May – Aug 2014	Regularly roll up CMA observational analyses of corps member classrooms throughout institute
Ensure corps member satisfaction		Mid-institute and End-of-institute surveys
Provide institute experience that is a critical component in corps members’ becoming successful teachers.		End-of-institute corps member survey

Ensure desired retention rates from institute to first day of school	May – Sept 2013 May – Sept 2014	Weekly retention reports
Gather, synthesize, and share info from external stakeholders on their reflections of institute – districts, principals, veteran teachers, etc.	May – Aug 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- End-of-institute principal and district teacher survey- Regular conversations with district staff
Gather, synthesize, and share info from internal stakeholders on their reflections of institute – seasonal staff, full-time staff, corps members	May – Aug 2013 August 2013; January 2014;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mid-institute and End-of-institute corps member surveys- End-of-institute seasonal staff survey- August and Jan full-time staff surveys
Facilitate knowledge sharing and cross-institutes learning	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- August and Jan full-time staff surveys- Quarterly TPSD retreats
Owner	Ted Quinn	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Conduct on-going analysis of student achievement data/teacher effectiveness during first year	Sept – June 2014 Sept– June 2015	Monthly analysis of percentage of corps members target to being effective and/or highly effective throughout the school year
Owner(s)	Michael Aronson; Annie Lewis; Kelvey Oeser	
Prepared to successfully implement 2014 institute, including design and operations planning		
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Determine vision for institute (curriculum, sessions, and structure)	Aug 2013 – Jan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Institute-specific IMT conferences to conduct vision setting- National conferences and leadership journeys (OOI, NIO, and TPSD) to conduct vision setting
Train and prepare staff to provide effective training to corps members	Feb – June 2014	Institute-specific IMT training conferences for seasonal staff
Prepare corps members to attend institute	Nov 2013; Jan 2014; March 2014; May 2014	Corps members assigned to institute and receive pre-work after each application/selection window
Owner	Michael Aronson; Min Kim	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Hire staff	Oct 2013 – April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Applications launched (Oct)- Interviews conducted (Dec-March)- Hiring finalized (Feb-April)
Secure and execute University contracts (for food and lodging)	Oct 2013 – May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strategy setting and negotiations (Oct-Feb)- Draft and finalize contracts (Jan-April)- Contract execution (May)
Objective	TFA successfully pilots regional training institutes	
Owner	Michael Aronson	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Ensure regions submit proposals to OII and org leadership to run a regional training institute	Aug-Sept 2013	OOI reviews proposals with region to determine viability
Determine regional training regions for 2014, with input from OII and org leadership	Sept 2013	
Guide regions to work with OOI, NIO,	Oct – Jan 2014	Regions attend national training conferences

and TPSD-Design to flesh out vision for and plan for implementing institutes		and IMT retreats to grow knowledge base
Guide regions to work with TPSD-Design to develop additional curriculum and staff training to realize their regional training institute vision; OOI to implement staff training; and NIO to finalize operations	Jan-May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attending OOI conferences - Interviewing and hiring staff - Training staff - Contracting with university partners - Determining placements with districts - Communicating with corps members
Implement 5 regional training institutes in 2014 (using observational tools and methods described above)	May-Aug 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular observations of corps members teaching summer school - Corps members attend teacher training sessions
Facilitate regional leadership stepping back with OOI to reflect on successes and challenge	Sept-Oct 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of regional training institutes by reviewing CMA analyses, surveying staff, and analyzing Corps Strength Index (CSI)
Objective	TFA begins to align institute curriculum and resources with the Common Core	
Owner	Michael Aronson; Annie Lewis	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Determine pilot sites, grade levels, and subject areas	Aug-Oct 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and finalize Relay math content modules (14 completed by Sept) - All institutes implement baseline CC aligned ELA ISATs - 2 ELA lab teachers at Delta Institute and 4 math lab teachers at Tulsa Institute
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire contractors (videographers) - Harvest lessons learned from 2013 Institute - Begin design work for alignment of Common Core with existing (and creation of new) resources 	Sept-Nov 2013	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue design work – develop training sessions around revamped ISATs; review and revise other training sessions to infuse content and context specific perspectives - Train institute staff 	Jan-April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete Relay modules (36 completed by May) - Complete revamped ISATs (April)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement pilot at 2 sites across 6 content areas/grade levels - Finalize evaluation rubric for fall 	May-Aug 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of corps member classrooms throughout institute to determine emphasis on Common Core alignment - Analysis of corps member classrooms throughout the school year to determine emphasis on Common Core alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observe pilot and non-pilot classrooms for evidence of rigor and Common Core alignment - Harvest lessons learned and plan for expansion to other institutes 	Sept-Oct 2014	

C.3 – Sufficient and Reasonable Resources

We are confident that the proposed management plan includes the resources necessary to effectively carry out the proposed project as well as strategically increasing capacity to execute

the pilots, including engaging contractors and partners. This is primarily through existing staff structures and strategically engaging contractors and partners. These efforts are grounded in an overall environment of cost effectiveness and efficiency. Please note that additional information about adequacy of resources to evaluate the project is included in Section E.4.

Grounded in our 20 years of experience planning, designing, and implementing training institutes, we have developed a staffing structure for institutes that utilize seasonal and full-time staff in a way that ensures appropriate and adequate time commitments, sufficient and reasonable resources, and overall program effectiveness. Seasonal staff members (often second year TFA corps members and alums) spend a finite amount of time on staff, every hour of which is maximized – they attend all-day, weekend trainings sessions and engage in independent pre-work in the Spring to prepare to hit the ground running at institute; they provide short-term, high-intensity training and coaching to corps members working at least 14 hours a day throughout the five weeks of institute. National teams like OOI and NIO are solely dedicated to ensuring the effective management of institutes. Staff members work throughout the year (many were at one time seasonal staff) and dedicate their expertise to improving institute by analyzing lessons learned year over year. Other national teams, such as TPSD, split their time between our teacher training efforts and the ongoing support structure, which ensures a seamless integration of the training and support models so that corps members are experiencing a cohesive program continuum, grounded in TFA’s overarching Teaching As Leadership framework.

Adjustments to our teacher training program – regional training institutes and integrating Common Core standards into training efforts – are supported in large part by this existing framework. However, any new expenses are thoroughly vetted by organizational leadership to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources and their explicit link to increasing the

impact of our corps members. This includes strategically engaging contractors; for example, contracting with external vendors to video capture Common Core modules (as explained in B.1) to ensure broader dissemination. We also work in strategic partnerships to exchange best practices and resources. Through this project, we are working with Relay Graduate School of Education to develop Common Core-aligned STEM training modules available for use by both TFA and Relay cohorts.

TFA is known for its cost effectiveness. In 2010, Worth Magazine named TFA one of the 10 most cost effective charities in the country. In 2012, Charity Navigator gave TFA a perfect 4-star rating for the tenth straight year. Less than 1% of all nonprofits nationwide have received similar consecutive 4-star ratings, putting us in the 99th percentile among nonprofits.

Due to the proven-effectiveness of our teacher training model (as outlined in Section A), combined with our twenty years of experience effectively designing and implementing summer training institutes and recognized cost effectiveness, we are confident that our plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed SEED project.

SECTION D: SUSTAINABILITY

The SEED project focuses on developing and implementing training institutes that have a demonstrable impact on corps members' ability to become effective and highly effective teachers in their first year in the classroom. It has been designed to be both financially and programmatically sustainable – building long term capacity and results, yielding findings and products that are useful to others, and disseminating information about results and outcomes in ways that others will find useful.

D.1 – Designed to Build Capacity and Yield Results

This SEED project is designed to build long-term financial and programmatic capacity that will yield outcomes both for the organization and the broader education community that will endure beyond this grant project period.

Building long-term financial capacity. Throughout the project period, June 2013 – October 2014, the total estimated cost of developing and implementing a planned 11 institutes in 2013 and 14 institutes in 2014 (including pre-institute work, new regional institute models, and efforts to align to Common Core) is more than \$60 million (approximately \$5,000 per corps member). A \$15 million SEED grant will cover a meaningful portion of project costs while ensuring that we do not become too reliant on any one funding source.

Federal funding reduces TFA’s overall fundraising burden in two ways. First, federal funding is a critical sources of support and key component of our diversified base of support – comprised of 70% private funding (27% individuals; 30% local and national foundations; 13% corporations) and 30% public dollars (18% public school partners; 12% local, state, and federal partners). We could not invest the same level of resources in teacher preparation and continuous improvement if we relied only on local funding sources. Second, being a recipient of federal funding speaks to the health of our organization in a way that will allow us to continue to leverage a substantial amount of private funding for every public dollar invested. SEED support will enable TFA to attract additional investors and supporters, and will be a significant contributor to the long-term financial health and sustainability of the organization.

Building long-term programmatic capacity. The learnings produced throughout this project, particularly through the project evaluation, will build long-term programmatic capacity for TFA. Evaluation methods (outlined in Section E), especially heavy use of surveys and observational data, provide ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of various aspects of institute.

This feedback will provide insights into successful design and delivery of summer institutes, and enable each year to build upon lessons learned from the past.

Many tools and resources developed for institutes are versatile and can be used by staff and corps members in contexts well beyond institute. Videos and online resources are especially scalable and flexible tools that increase overall program capacity – corps members and staff can access at any time and incorporate into independent study, group learning experiences, coaching and feedback sessions. The pilots that are supported by SEED, are designed to build program capacity by testing and refining new approaches, and making the learnings, tools, and resources available to program staff and corps members nationwide. In particular, building organizational understanding of Common Core will ultimately result in nationally-relevant, quality Common Core resources available to program staff and corps members nationwide.

Enduring results. This project will yield enduring results for TFA and the broader education community. Institute is the first step in building the long-term capacity of TFA corps members, enabling them to be highly effective teachers and education leaders who, years after their institute experience, will continue to positively influence their fellow teachers, their schools, and their students. After their two-year classroom commitment, two-thirds of our corps members continue to serve in the field of education, while others stay engaged in serving the greater cause as policy advisors, non-profit leaders, and activists in their communities. In fact it is alumni (and current corps members) that make up the majority of seasonal institute staff. Thus, in addition to training *new* corps members, the staff training they receive and the coaching they do at institute as part of this project will help corps members and alumni to improve their teaching practices, further develop as leaders, and builds other skills that are critical in their long term development as educational leaders.

Additionally, regional training institutes represent an opportunity to develop more robust, year-round partnerships with schools and districts that are more strategic, less transactional, and thus more sustainable, enduring, and high impact (explained further in Section D.3).

D.2– Yield Findings and Products Useful for Other Organizations

This SEED project will produce research findings and new tools and resources for teacher preparation, while also enabling us to deepen existing partnerships and foster new ones in ways that will contribute new knowledge and products. This will happen throughout this project through three key avenues – developing and sharing Common Core aligned resources with interested university and district partners; deepening school and district partnerships via regional training institutes; and the ongoing development of Teaching As Leadership (TAL).

Common Core aligned resources. Throughout the course of this project, institute staff will work with university partners and district leaders to create materials that help new teachers understand and apply Common Core standards in ELA and math. For example, our partnership with Relay Graduate School of Education will create 36 Common Core-aligned online content math modules that will be available to Relay students as well as TFA corps members. With the approach of new Common Core assessments in 2015, we anticipate high demand across our entire network for the approaches and materials that emerge from this pilot. We will work with interested district partners and university partners to share resources and learnings.

Regional training institutes strengthen local partnerships. District and charter faculty who serve as local advisors during institute function as knowledge bridges, conveying the best practices, tools, and resources used at institute back to their home institutions. As our institutes expand and innovate with SEED funding, we expect these knowledge sharing efforts to accelerate and deepen, especially for the regional training institutes that require local TFA

leadership to partner closely with host schools and district – jointly designing the summer training curriculum, co-developing resources, and more intentionally integrating the summer experience into local teacher development efforts, including those related to Common Core instructional shifts. For example, TFA-Memphis has entered into a close partnership with the Tennessee Achievement School District and several charter schools to develop a summer school program and curriculum to meet shared goals for both student summer learning and teacher training – a partnership that will likely yield new shared practices, resources, and tools.

Teaching As Leadership (TAL). TAL is TFA’s core pedagogical framework, which has been published¹⁸ and is widely available. TAL emerged from close study of our best teachers and has strongly influenced our institute design. We fully expect that further revisions to the TAL Framework will stem from the ongoing work of our institutes. The products and findings that emerge from this work (TAL 2.0) will be accessible to practitioners, researchers, and the general public via the TFA website and other online media.

D.3 – Disseminating Information about Outcomes

We envision two main paths for disseminating information – one aimed primarily at the TFA network to spur the spread of best practice and spark further innovation, and the other directed toward partnering organizations and the broader field.

Internal network. We are intent on sharing information about results and outcomes of this project, and especially lessons learned through Common Core alignment and regional training institute pilots, across our national network so that all 46 regions may benefit from the lesson learned in these pilot initiatives. TFA’s cross-regional knowledge sharing mechanisms include: Innovation knowledge-sharing space – We will make information about innovative

¹⁸ Farr, S. & Kopp, W. (2010). Teaching as Leadership: The Highly Effective Teacher’s Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

practices and resources about pilot design and evaluation easily accessible for all staff members on TFA’s internal team websites, and organization-wide social media platforms; Innovative practices and metrics tracking – We will identify and catalogue regional, national, and external innovations, as well as gather and analyze survey results and other metrics to inform ongoing design and delivery of training innovations; Innovation sessions – Our institute team will host training innovation sessions that include sharing best practices, skills training, and regional roundtables during organization-wide summits and various staff retreats.

External network. Dissemination of best practices, resources, and insights primarily happens through partnership with universities, schools, and school districts (as outlined in Section D.2). In addition to collaborating with school, school system, and university partners, TFA will harness its community outreach and marketing efforts to communicate learnings to the field and general public through traditional print vehicles and social media (for example, through TFA’s own magazine, *One Day*, which is widely distributed to alumni, funders, policy makers, school partners, and other interested parties). Additionally, TFA is one of the most studied teacher preparation program in the country. We fully expect interest in studying our teacher preparation methodology will continue throughout the course of this grant and well beyond. Through our broad set of K-12 and higher education partnership, and outreach to the broader field, we are eager to share our learnings from our work in teacher preparation so that greater numbers of highly effective teachers will be teaching in our nation’s high-need schools.

SECTION E: EVALUATION

E.1 – Evaluation Methods, Outcomes, and Periodic Assessments

As described in Section B, TFA has clear objectives, measures, and goals for each of the three central components of this project – planning, designing, and delivering institutes; piloting

regional training institutes; and aligning institute curriculum and resources with the Common Core. Our overarching goal for this project is to have a demonstrable impact on corps members' ability to become effective and highly effective teachers in their first year in the classroom. Thus, our primary mode of evaluation involves rigorous, quantitative measures of teacher effectiveness in year one of teaching. In addition, we aim to better understand the impact of institute, and of our institute pilots, on corps members through subjective measures that provide valuable feedback for corps members, program staff, and organizational leadership to inform current and future practice and priorities. Finally, we manage and track our implementation progress across all three major project components. In executing this comprehensive approach to evaluation, we use a variety of indicators and tools, which are described below, to enable regular feedback and ensure that we are on track to achieve the project outcomes.

Rigorous, Quantitative Measures of Teacher Effectiveness. We have developed a comprehensive system, grounded in student achievement data from rigorous tests, to measure the percentage of corps members, trained at summer institutes, who are highly effective and/or effective during their first year in the classroom. While factors beyond summer institute training, including the ongoing support provided by TFA, certainly contribute to first year corps members' effectiveness, we believe this measure is our most reliable internal indicator of the impact of our teacher preparation program, of which summer institute is the cornerstone.

Our context is unique in that our corps members serve in 46 regions across 35 states and teach more than 40 subjects. We have designed our student achievement management system (SAMS) to address the complexity of cross-contextual comparisons and the need for well-calibrated student achievement data to provide useful data for corps members and TFA staff.

SAMS enables corps members and TFA staff members to set and manage toward ambitious yet feasible and measurable goals for their students, while providing objective and calibrated data to drive programmatic improvements. The system is grounded in the aspiration that our corps members perform at the level of top performing teachers – specifically, we aspire for our corps members to be, on average, at the 75th percentile of all teachers (not just novice teachers). Corps members are therefore measured against a benchmark that reflects a high-performing classroom wherein students achieve high rates of student growth. At the beginning of the year, corps members work with program staff to determine what their specific classroom benchmark should be, based on historical test score data.

When we articulate goals and progress toward goals in SAMS, we use “percent of benchmark achieved” – where 100% of benchmark achieved represents what top teachers would accomplish in one year. As part of the SEED grant, we will rely on SAMS to track the number of corps members deemed to be “highly effective” and “effective.”¹⁹ As shown in Section B.1, our goal for first year corps members who participated in summer institute in 2013 is that 37% of first-year teachers are rated as “highly effective,” and that 76% of first-year are rated as either “highly effective and/or effective.” Our “highly effective” and “highly effective and/or effective” goals for 2014 institute participants are 38% and 77% respectively.

Corps members and staff utilize an online Program Tracker system to collect student achievement data – the type of assessments; how students scored on these assessments; and a benchmark representing the performance of a top teacher in this context. This information is entered into the Program Tracker. This data is aggregated and analyzed by the TPSD Strategy team to determine the total number of effective and highly effective teachers.

¹⁹ We define effective and highly effective as those corps members making % benchmark achieved equal to 1-1.4 years of growth or 1.5 or more years of growth, respectively.

Subjective Measures of Teacher Practice and Institute Impact. To gain additional insight into the impact of key project components, and have some intermediate indicators of performance, we also use qualitative, observational methods of evaluation.

Overall Institute Impact. The purpose of institute, and of this project, is to prepare corps members to be successful teachers. Thus TFA training must result in a demonstrable impact on corps members' ability to become effective teachers in their first year in the classroom.

We evaluate progress toward this goal throughout institute by observing and analyzing corps member summer school classrooms to determine the extent to which they have created a culture of achievement highlighted by engagement in rigorous content. "Culture of achievement" refers to the extent to which students act in ways that suggest they are "on a mission" toward a destination that really matters to their futures. Engagement with rigorous content refers to the extent to which students are engaging deeply with the content and skills needed for success in their current course and beyond. Appendix E.1 contains an overview of the TAL Impact Model, which outlines the role cultures of achievement and engagement in rigorous content play in creating a transformational learning experience for students, and the role teacher actions and mindsets play in creating a culture of achievement and engagement with rigorous content. We have found that the presence of these two factors result in students emerging from these classrooms on a path of expanded opportunities due to major academic and personal growth.

Throughout institute, Corps Member Advisors (CMAs) regularly (often multiple times a week) observe corps members' classrooms and assess the extent to which they are seeing:

- Corps members exhibiting an understanding and mastery of the six TAL leadership principals – setting an ambitious vision for student success; investing students and their influencers in that vision in an ongoing and purposeful way; planning purposefully to meet

ambitious goals; executing plans effectively; working relentlessly to achieve their vision; and continuously reflecting and improving to maximize learning.

- Students exhibiting behaviors and actions that signify a culture of achievement – these behaviors and actions range from being on-task, to being interested and hard-working, to being passionate, urgent, and joyful.
- Students exhibiting behaviors and actions that signify they are engaging with rigorous content – these behaviors range from displaying factual recall of content, to explaining, analyzing and applying content knowledge and skills to understand new information, to evaluating and synthesizing content to create new and deeper understandings.

CMAs meet with corps members regularly to share their observations. CMAs are trained during spring IMT conferences on effective observation and coaching – to observe and analyze classrooms to determine progress toward a path-changing vision for students, including identifying cultures of achievement and engagement with rigorous content. CMAs use their analyses to define meaningful changes for students that corps members can work toward throughout their institute experience. CMAs and corps members work together to prioritize a set of teacher actions that the corps members can take to bring about that change, and a plan for coaching the corps members to execute those actions.

Observational data is rolled up to the IMT and used to inform institute teacher training in an ongoing way throughout institute. At the end of the summer, this data is further rolled up to OOI leadership and used to inform the design and development of future institutes.

Regional Institute Impact. While retaining many of the core aspects of institute training overall (as outlined in Section B), the goal of piloting regional institutes is to provide regions with the autonomy and flexibility to develop a model that is uniquely tailored to the local

context. The anticipated outcomes are stronger relationships between TFA and community partners (school districts, charter networks, schools of education) that result in a training regimen that is more streamlined, and increases corps member understanding of and commitment to affecting change in specific communities.

We will evaluate the impact of regional institute pilots using TFA's corps strength index (CSI) – a set of 12 questions that measure different aspects of our corps culture that have been shown to predict a range of outcomes that we think are critical to achieving our mission: corps member achievement, retention, engagement as alumni, and so on. We believe comparing average CSI scores for corps members attending national institutes to the average scores of those corps members attending regional training institutes, will show a measureable increase for corps members in regional institutes. Corps members in regional institutes will be teaching in the same cluster of schools, with the same people (regional staff, other corps members, school and district partners, and area alumni) throughout their entire TFA experience. We believe this consistency and ability to tailor training to the local context will result in a stronger corps, as evidenced by higher overall average CSI scores relative to corps members in national institutes.

The TPSD Strategy team collects CSI data and calculates an average score (subtracting weak responses from strong responses) and then averages into a net score. National and regional institute staff will receive this data in the fall, as they are beginning planning for the following year, thus providing ample time to analyze, understand, and act upon results.

Common Core Pilot Impact. The Common Core Pilot is in the early stages of development, as such, we have not yet defined targets. However, as part of this project, we are committed to conducting an evaluation in fall 2014, after the first pilot implementation, whereby national TPSD Design team content experts who participated in the design of the Common Core

trainings and resources observe the classrooms of a meaningful subset of pilot participants and non-pilot participants teaching the same subject and grade level in a similar context. They will conduct these observations approximately 8 weeks into the school year and look for evidence of rigorous, Common Core-aligned practices, resources, classroom artifacts, teacher actions, and student work and behaviors. The Design team will partner with the TPSD Strategy team, which has significant experience developing pilot evaluations, to develop and test a rubric for guiding these observations while they are designing and implementing the pilot. After their observations, The data will be aggregated and compared across pilot and non-pilot sites to gain insight into whether or not pilot participants are more likely to demonstrate effective integration of the Common Core and higher order learning into their classroom. Results will be used to set targets for improvement for future years, and to inform the refinement of the piloted resources and the development of new Common Core-aligned resources for additional grades and subjects.

Input, Output, and Process Measures. This project includes input, output, and process measures related to the number of participants in the three core activities; retention through institute and into the classroom; and the resources required to deliver this project overall (i.e., cost per institute participant).

TFA has a central Placement Tracker system that contains information on all our corps members, including their region, attendance at institute, teacher placement (school, grade, subject), and retention throughout their two year TFA commitment. Institute staff enters data into the Placement Tracker on an ongoing basis. Our National District Strategy team, with assistance from the TPSD team, monitors the data weekly and follows up with regions to ensure information is entered accurately and completely.

Placement Tracker data allows the OOI and others to efficiently monitor and report on how many corps members attend summer institutes, and the percentage that begin teaching each fall. It also provides useful data on regional corps size and placement mix – context (charter, traditional district), grade, subject – to assist the TPSD team in making decisions about conducting institute pilots; such as helping the leaders of the Common Core alignment pilot determine which regions would align with their desired scale and sample sizes. Finally, this system provides critical inputs to metrics reliant on corps size numbers, including calculations of cost per institute participant, and is, thus, a key tool in linking participation in different institutes or institute pilots to performance data, observations, survey results, etc.

The OOI determines how many institutes we need each year by monitoring corps size targets and projections – overall and by region – on an ongoing basis. For planning purposes, the Growth, Development, and Partnerships (GDP) team projects total incoming corps size for future years and monitors progress – and any major fluctuations – throughout the recruitment and admissions season and through corps member placement. Regions update their projections monthly, and national team members sign off on these projections for accuracy. These ongoing projections provide the information needed to evaluate and make decisions about the number of institutes, which regions will participate in which centralized national institute, and which regions may be approved for a regional institute pilot.

Regions interested in piloting a regional training institute are required to submit a proposal to TPSD senior leadership that includes the following: regional training institute vision and how that fits into the overall regional vision; Good Faith Agreement with school/school district partner(s); proposal and cost estimate from university partner; staffing proposal for first two years; and overall budget. Additionally, to be eligible for consideration for hosting a regional

institute, regions must have demonstrated solid student achievement results for corps members in recent years and have an Executive Director who has demonstrated the desire, capacity, and leadership to pursue this opportunity. Finally, TFA will take into consideration how the proposal fits within the overall organizational institute capacity needs, as well as fiscal impact analysis. It is through this process that TPSD senior leadership, in conjunction with organizational leadership, determines the viability of regional training institute proposals.

The TPSD Design team is responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress with the Common Core pilot. As noted above, their decisions on where to pilot are informed by both historical data from the Placement Tracker and projections from GDP corps size trackers. Once a pilot is underway, participating corps members' records are flagged as being pilot participants to manage communication, appropriate survey dissemination, accurate reporting, and the ability to link their personal data to other datasets as needed for analysis.

Finally, in evaluating and monitoring the resources required to deliver the overall project, we determine the cost per participant by dividing the total expenditures over the project period by the total number of incoming corps members trained in 2013 and 2014. Throughout the project, on a quarterly basis, the Finance team will utilize budget forecast data and incoming corps size projections to determine whether we are on track for hitting our target cost per participant. This information will be shared with the Project Director and Co-Project Director, so that adjustments to future expenditures can be made if necessary.

E.2 – Sufficient Resources

We believe we have developed an evaluation plan and approach that is simultaneously robust, efficient, and cost effective. The most complex and resource- intensive aspects of our evaluation will be executed by the 14-person TPSD Strategy team that manages SAMS and

conducts data analysis to determine the impact of various aspects of our teacher preparation and support program on corps members and their students. This team, led by Ted Quinn, has significant experience with student achievement data, pilot design, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. Notably, the SAMS results associated with this project are also associated with our overall organizational priorities and goals. Thus, the SEED project will not need to build additional capacity or attract new resources to execute that aspect of the evaluation.

Similarly, most of the other metrics associated with this project evaluation can be generated from existing datasets – in many instances, the evaluation primarily requires linking existing datasets, or cutting datasets in new ways, completing straightforward calculations or analysis, and then providing the data and results to the appropriate program team or leader.

The one piece of the evaluation plan that does require some incremental capacity and resources is the evaluation of the impact of the Common Core pilot. However, we see the opportunity to conduct an observational assessment of this pilot in 2014 as absolutely critical to the success of this particular initiative, and a very wise investment of resources before we seek to expand the effort to new institutes, grades, and subject levels. Thus, we have included sufficient resources to help the TPSD Design team to execute this plan. This team will be able to draw on the expertise of the TPSD Strategy team to help ensure high quality development and execution.

Competitive Preference Priority 1 –Strong Evidence of Effectiveness

In rigorous independent studies and in states that use student achievement data to analyze the relative effectiveness of teacher pathways, TFA corps members are consistently shown to be as or more effective at promoting student achievement at statistically significant levels compared to other new teachers. These results are confirmed by both a large-scale experimental study and quasi-experimental study.

Experimental. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. released an independent study in 2004 that compared the academic gains of students taught by TFA corps members with the gains of similar students taught by other teachers in the same schools and grades. Using random assignment of students to teachers – the research methodology that meets the highest WWC standard– this study found that students of TFA corps members attained comparable gains in reading and significantly greater gains in math compared with students of other teachers, including veteran and certified teachers.²⁰ The researchers concluded that the impact of TFA teachers on student achievement in math amounted to the equivalent of approximately one additional month of instruction. When the TFA teachers were compared only to novice non-TFA teachers (novice teachers defined as being in their first three years of teaching), the effect size was 0.26. The authors noted that the impact of having a Teach For America teacher compared with another novice teacher was roughly equivalent to reducing class size by eight students.

Quasi-Experimental. The Urban Institute conducted a study in 2008 and 2009 evaluating the impact of TFA corps members on student achievement at the high-school level.²¹ Researchers found that the impact of a TFA teacher was equivalent to an effect size of 0.10, exceeding that of have a teacher with three or more years of experience. Researchers concluded that corps members had a stronger impact on student achievement than all other non-TFA teachers, including more experienced teachers. Researchers wrote: “Disadvantaged secondary students would be better off with TFA teachers, especially in math and science, than with fully licensed in-field teachers with three or more years of experience.”

New Teacher Comparisons. As per Race to the Top recommendations, several states are beginning to use evidence to rank teacher preparation programs. In the three states that have

²⁰ Decker, P., Mayer, D., & Glazerman, S. (2004). *The Effects of Teach For America on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation*. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

²¹ Xu, Z., Hannaway, J., & Taylor, C. (2007). Making a Difference? The Effects of Teach for America in High School. *The Urban Institute and the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research*.

collected such evidence (Tennessee, North Carolina, and Louisiana) TFA consistently ranks among the most effective teacher preparation programs in those states as measured by student achievement outcomes. While not experimental or quasi-experimental in design, this emerging body of research consistently points to the high quality and proven effectiveness of TFA's teacher preparation program.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of the SEED grant, 12,500 corps members will have received the proven-effective foundational teacher training needed to become effective and highly effective teachers working with high-need students in low-income classrooms throughout the country. The vast majority of these corps members will remain in the classroom for at least two years and consistently advance their students' achievement. As alumni, informed by this training and subsequent classroom experience, they will provide critical leadership in schools and districts, and in the broader nonprofit, policy, and business community; they will drive innovations from inside and outside the education system – as political leaders and policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and civic leaders in all sectors – dedicated to expanding educational opportunity.

We will have new insights into how adjustments to the structure of institute, from a national model to piloting regional training institutes, will impact corps strength and foster greater collaboration with local partners. This pilot, as well as project efforts to align training resources and instruction to the Common Core, will result in learnings and resources that can be shared throughout the TFA network and the education community more broadly.

As a result of these efforts, this project will have expanded the pipeline of long-term teachers and leaders and created new resources and learnings for the broader community dedicated to improving outcomes for high-need students for many years to come.